

US 93 Corridor Plan: Missoula to Florence

Public Meeting(s) #1

February 14, 15 and 16, 2006

5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

RESULTS

Lolo - February 14, 2006

Lolo Community Center

Attendance

- 35 area residents
- MDT
 - Dwane Kailey
 - Shane Stack
 - Lynn Zanto
 - Sheila Ludlow
- FHWA
 - Craig Genzlinger
- Consultant Team
 - Bob Burkhardt
 - Don Galligan, HDR
 - Miguel Gaddi, HDR
 - Jeff Lowe, HDR
 - Karen [REDACTED], HDR
 - Mike Pepper, KMP

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Safety

- Improper yielding and merging – Hayes Creek intersection
 - Need for increased law enforcement and Corridor driver education
- Hayes Creek / Skyway Dr. - logging road intersection has conflicts / safety issues
- Mormon Creek intersection in right northbound lane
 - Merging through center lane is dangerous
- Additional truck traffic at US 93 intersection to distribution center in Lolo (Vans)
- Old US 93 intersection
 - lack of left turn lane, creates unsafe turning movements / conflicts
 - difficult to judge which lane oncoming cars are in to avoid merging conflicts
 - peak hour congestion – may need signal
- Tyler / US 93 intersection
 - No crosswalk on Tyler – presents unsafe conditions for pedestrians from northbound US 93 drivers turning right onto Tyler
- Cochise Dr. – accident location, but not intersection caused – driver error
- Illegal / dangerous parking along US 93 near Weigh Station to access river recreation
 - Causes unsafe pedestrian activity and crossing
- Lack of protected left turn from Miller Creek Road onto US 93 southbound – creates congestion and safety problems

Roadway design, operation and maintenance

- Flooding concerns at Skyway Dr. and Hayes Creek
- Narrow shoulder between lane and guardrail presents dangerous conditions for bicyclists
- Lack of alternate route between Lolo and Missoula – consider use of Old US 93
 - Causes backups when closed due to accidents or other emergencies
- Lack of separation between north and southbound lanes - dangerous
- Dip on Blue Mtn Road at approach to US 93 – unsafe
- Lolo School crossing
 - Lack of protected left turn into school
 - Traffic stacking at US 93 / US 12 intersection due to signal at Lolo School
 - Consider overhead bike/ped crossing of US 93 to Lolo School
- Center dividers in Lolo need to be readdressed for effectiveness
- Lack of frontage roads in Lolo area to reduce local use traffic on/off of US 93
- Lack of connections from US 93 to Old US 93, when functioning as an alternate route
 - Such as Manor Drive
- Lack of protected left turn from Old US 93 onto US 93 northbound
- Sight distance issues at Trader Brothers

Multi-modal options

- Lack of separated bike / ped pathway from Lolo to Missoula
- Consider overhead bike/ped crossing of US 93 to Lolo School
- Lack of sidewalks on US 93 for pedestrian safety through Lolo

Growth and development

- Lack of US 93 alternate route to serve development south of Buckhouse Bridge – west side to reduce limit access to US 93
 - Lack of internal road connections off US 93 to reduce traffic on US 93
 - Apply to both residential or “big box” developments
- Increasing difficulty in developing a US 93 alternate route due to development
- Glacier / Ridgeway intersections – difficult on/off US 93
 - 100 homes planned up Glacier / Ridgeway
- Additional traffic from development at Lewis / Clark (east side of US 93)
 - Increasing use of parking areas as frontage road to access signal on US 93

Roadway capacity and level of service

- Lack of traffic breaks at peak traffic times – 7 to 9:30 a.m. and 3 to 6:30 p.m.
- Congestion at Blue Mtn Road – westbound from US 93
- Traffic stacking is increasing

Environmental

- Deer crossing and congestion near Buckhouse Bridge

Planning / process / data / related area issues

- *Integrate land use with transportation planning*
- *Consider a longer time period for accident data for US 93 north of Lolo*

Missoula - February 15, 2006
Quality Inn Conference Center

Attendance

- 39 area residents
- MDT
 - Dwane Kailey
 - Shane Stack
 - Lynn Zanto
 - Sheila Ludlow
- FHWA
 - Bob Burkhardt
- Consultant Team
 - Craig Genzlinger
 - Don Galligan, HDR
 - Miguel Gaddi, HDR
 - Jeff Lowe, HDR
 - Karen [REDACTED], HDR
 - Mike Pepper, KMP

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Safety

- Need to maintain safe access off US 93 to Hayes St.
- The four lane undivided sections of US 93 are unsafe due to left turn movements / conflicts
- Accommodate safe access to recreation / sportsman's access sites along US 93
- Consider / accommodate school transportation safety needs/conflicts on US 93
- Conflicting movements in center lane – cause unsafe conditions and accidents

Roadway design, operation and maintenance

- Speeds on US 93 near Hayes St. intersection are too fast
- The four lane undivided sections of US 93 are unsafe due to left turn movements / conflicts
- Maintain access to US 93 for existing residences
- Consider / accommodate school transportation safety needs/conflicts on US 93
- Traffic speeds are too high – consider additional signals to reduce speed
- Maintain access to US 93 if center dividers are installed
- Seek ways to expedite travel, not impede – don't pursue "traffic circles"
 - Distinguish different types of circles, roundabouts, etc.
- Consider recommendations to reduce local shipping / delivery traffic; originate from locations other than Missoula
- Consider implementation of slower / more consistent speeds to improve safety

Multi-modal options

- Inadequate availability of vans and other modes of transportation
- Lack of separated bike/ped pathway and wide shoulders between Lolo and Missoula
- Connect / coordinate with Missoula City Park Master Plan where appropriate

Growth and development

- Act on improvement alternatives before right of way is unavailable

Roadway capacity and level of service

- Pursue opportunities to reduce traffic volumes
 - Extension of bus service from Missoula to Hamilton
 - Study work/destinations to plan for “hot spot” locations for bus service
 - Connect any new transit services to Missoula Bus Lines (Mountain Line)
 - *Note: MDT is seeking service now, some funds are available*
- Conflicts with increasing truck traffic into “Vans” in Lolo

Environmental

- Traffic volumes are too high; cause congestion, reduce air quality, decrease safety
 - Consider development of a fast mono rail system from Hamilton to Missoula
 - How to reduce northbound traffic from Bitterroot into Missoula
- Reduced valley air quality caused by increasing traffic on US 93
- Negative impacts from high and increasing traffic volumes – desire to reduce vehicle miles on US 93 – consider rail options and other multi-modal solutions
- This is a hazardous materials route - lack of facility support for this use – evaluate availability of federal funds for improvements
- Add design features to highlight the entrance to Missoula
- Maintain safety, livability and quality of life when planning US 93 corridor improvements
- Consider needs of aging population; ease of movement, emergency vehicle access, etc.

Planning / process / data / related area issues

- *Lack of data on other transportation modes; vans, buses, rail use, crossings, number of users, etc. to add/compare to vehicle use*
- *Need to identify on maps, the location of environmentally sensitive areas*
- *Need to add density maps to existing conditions information*
- *Project web site additions*
 - *Request to have the list of Advisory Committee members placed on the project web site*
 - *Request to have the PowerPoint presentation placed on the project web site*
 - *Keep web site simple to allow for easier use*
 - *Add links to related projects, such as Miller Creek EIS, Bridge Project, etc.*
- *Prefer that funds be spent on project improvements instead of planning*
 - *Costs for improvements and right of way continues to increase, while planning instead of actions*
- *Support for the planning process to address the Reserve St. needs and possible western access route*
- *Connect the development and results of the US 93 Corridor Plan to other planning efforts and projects to avoid duplication, oversight and overlapping*
- *Concern for what happens to traffic once it reaches the north end of this study area in the south end of Missoula – impacts of issues and alternatives on Reserve St., Brooks St., etc.*
- *Coordinate the outcome of the Miller Creek Bridge study with this plan*

- *Need to identify funding options other than taxes for implementation of Plan recommendations – developers should be billed for cost of improvements caused by their development*
- *Accommodate Fort Missoula crossing / connections as needed*
- *Coordinate / integrate with other planning efforts and development plans, such as Maloney Ranch*
- *Identify realistic project costs*
- *Plan “globally” – consider the relationship between different transportation modes*
 - *Gather and include necessary data to guide good decisions*
 - *Assess impacts of project recommendations to other / adjacent streets*
- *Reduce commuter traffic - Work with Ravalli County to make more self sufficient, more Ravalli County employment, etc.*
- *Add to the “Issues Map” - lacking Missoula to Lolo separated bike / ped pathway*
- *Suggest the project south boundary should be extended to Hamilton*
- *Include / consider development / growth south to Hamilton in planning for improvements and alternatives*
- *Noted the absence of the County Commissioners from the meeting, but recognized the attendance of two of the Missoula City Councilman*
- *Consider the impacts of high housing costs in Missoula*
- *Recognize the difficulty of creating a new east side alternate route*
 - *No funds are available for right of way acquisition or project development*
 - *There is no existing road, creating a new road would have significant impact on existing land uses and properties*
 - *Terrain is difficult for roadway construction*
- *An alternate route around Missoula to I-90 is needed – has been discussed for 35 years*
 - *Consider corridor preservation for future route around and through Missoula – this is an MPO responsibility to be addressed in another planning process*
 - *Pursue study of a western access route (not part of the US 93 Corridor Plan)*
- *Add to Stakeholder's list: Ken Willett, U of M Public Safety Director*
 - *Office of Public Safety, Building 32; Missoula MT 59812*
 - *(406) 243-6130 / WillettK@mso.umt.edu*
- *Connect Plan recommendations to related actions to support/enhance implementation*
- *Don't just assess vehicle capacity needs*
- *Look to other locations/cities/states for examples of possible alternatives and solutions*
- *Miller Crk Bridge – avoid “dumping” traffic from Miller Creek development onto US 93*
- *This is a regional problem involving four counties*
- *Identify and consider alternatives regardless of cost*
- *Understand the demand*
- *Investigate options for other employment opportunities that retain more jobs out of Missoula in other counties – to reduce commuter traffic into Missoula*
- *Bitterroot is a “dead end” valley – very little traffic continues south over Lost Trail Pass*
- *Be aware of affects of school closures as young residents leave area*

Florence - February 16, 2006
Florence – Carlton School

Attendance

- 32 area residents
- MDT
 - Dwane Kailey
 - Shane Stack
 - Sheila Ludlow
- Consultant Team
 - Don Galligan, HDR
 - Miguel Gaddi, HDR
 - Jeff Lowe, HDR
 - Katy [REDACTED], HDR
 - Shanna Adams, HDR
 - Mike Pepper, KMP

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Safety

- Center lane turning conflicts
- Lack of turn lanes to allow turning vehicles to get out of the travel lane – improve safety
- Too much access to US 93 – causes safety problems and decreases capacity
- Safety concerns / needs for vehicles turning left off of highway
- Unprotected left turns from US 93 are dangerous
- Lack of center turn lane refuge from Lolo to Florence to improve safety for turning vehicles – left turn from passing lane is dangerous

Roadway design, operation and maintenance

- Ice build up at MP 86.2 curve – water runs across pavement
- Old Hwy 93 maintenance needs attention
- Heavy vehicle crossings across Old Hwy 93 – in a blind gully on Old Hwy
- Stopping on US 93 to make right hand turns; lack of right turn lane
- Cars don't move left to allow merging
- No merging lanes at County Line Rd. (right)
- High speeds
- Rumble strips prevent people from moving right to make right turn
- US 93 shuts down when accidents occur; lack of alternate route
- Desire to reduce demand – consider adding roadway delay
- Excessive speed / Insufficient law enforcement
- Road rage is becoming an issue
- “Bottleneck” between Lolo and Missoula
- Difficult visibility of pavement markings during rain
- Road de-icer is causing rust on vehicles
- Lack of traffic breaks to allow safer access onto US 93 – traffic is too fast
- Lack of alternate routes – consider improvements to Old Hwy 93 to meet this need
- Emergency vehicle access to US 93 when blocked – consider east side access route to meet this need
- Roadway striping south of Florence is not straight

- Lack of access control at Trader Brothers and Maclay properties
- Speed is too high – needs increased enforcement
- Conflict between rail track and right of way and US 93 corridor / expansion needs – consider relocating rail to east side of river to allow for US 93 expansion (if expansion is needed)
- Illegal left turn across turn lane into Town Pump in Lolo
- If east side access is created, an ITE System will be needed
- Lack of right turn lanes for easier / safer egress from US 93 – Mormon Creek, Carlton Creek and Chief Joseph Roads
- Southbound right turn onto Mormon Creek Rd. is too tight for trucks
- Southbound left turn queue (turn bay storage) length onto Eastside Hwy is too short – a longer turn bay is limited due to conflict with other accesses
- Right turn lane from East Side Hwy onto US 93 northbound is too short – constrained by rail line
- Drainage problems at first curve north of Lolo – water is “funneled” through openings in the medians and causes hydroplaning and ice buildup
- Unsafe (too high) speeds at approach to Florence – too high for traffic and pedestrian crossing – need to move the lower speed limit further south, at least past the median
- Unresolved maintenance responsibility of the separated bike/ped pathway from Lolo south
- Rumble strips interfere with right turn movements and cause excessive noise
- High traffic volumes with difficult access – consider development of frontage roads

Multi-modal options

- Lack of bus service or train service between Florence and Missoula
- Lack of sufficient transit linkage in Missoula, once reached by any possible mass transit
- Shared use of rail right of way - If mass transit were made available, can freight rail be shared with passenger lines
- Rail bed is inadequate for transit use – can’t accommodate high speeds, high number of “at-grade” crossings
- Lack of separated bike / ped pathway between Lolo and Missoula – prefer that it be built further from the roadway than the pathway from Lolo south
- Vanpool schedules do not operate long enough (daily) to meet user needs
- Park and Ride lots are important, but there is a lack of adequate / illuminated lots, no lot in Florence, need adequate signage to direct traffic to designated facility

Growth and development

- Need to coordinate transportation and land use planning
- Improving the road will encourage further development
- Land use conflicts at US 93 / 8 mile road intersection
- Desire to maintain access control – limit new accesses as development occurs
- Sprawl development / increasing access and safety concerns - Need better planning to control development along highway

Roadway capacity and level of service

- Difficult US 93 access / egress – consider additional signals
- Insufficient capacity to meet traffic volume needs – consider extension of East Side Highway into Missoula
- Too much access to US 93 – causes safety problems and decreases capacity
- Signals increase morning commute congestion
- Congestion during peak hours
 - Consider alternating lanes for quicker travel, HOV lanes, carpooling to use lanes more effectively
- High traffic volumes with difficult access – consider development of frontage roads

Environmental

- US 93 impacts to adjacent wetlands
- Need to avoid or mitigate impacts to cultural and historical sites
- Dirt and dust from winter sanding causes air pollution and unsafe bike ped use on pathway as sand lands on the pathway
- Rumble strips interfere with right turn movements and cause excessive noise

Planning / process / data / related area issues

- *None at this time*

PUBLIC MEETING(S) #1 CUMULATIVE COMMENT FORM INPUT

Safety

- Undivided four lane section seems dangerous – consider divider

Roadway design, operation and maintenance

- Lack of left turn signal on Glacier Dr. in Lolo from south
- Lack of southbound protected left turn signal from Miller Creek intersection
- Lack of alternate route on east side from Florence to/through Miller Creek
- Lack of protected left turns from US 93 in Lolo
- Lack of sufficient lighting
- Don't stack snow on pathways, sidewalks and shoulders
- Impact of intermittent portable scale on Hwy 12/US 93 intersection
- Consider retrofit as a "super 2", add roundabouts (single lane)
- Lower the speed limit
- Lack of dedicated turn lane from US 93 to County Line Road at MP 77
- Lack of dedicated right turn lanes at intersections throughout US 93 corridor
- Lack of traffic signal at Trader Brothers to provide improved access / roadway operation
- Lack of turn lanes (both left and right) off US 93 to 8 Mile Road

Multi-modal options

- Desire for bus service from Missoula to Lolo, Florence and south
- Consider light rail as option to reduce vehicle traffic on US 93
- Connection of the separated bike / ped pathway between Lolo and Missoula is critically important
- Lack of bike trail, bus and train corridor
- Consider alternate transportation on Bitterroot Spur of MRL line
- Include bike/ped/equestrian routes in transportation corridor
- There could be discussion with Montana Rail Link about "rail banking" the Bitterroot Branch to become the non-motorized connection
- Lack of commuter train from south valley into Missoula
 - Consider flat rail car to carry cars into Missoula and back to south valley

Growth and development

- Consider east side alternate route to serve new development on east side of US 93 from Florence to Missoula

Roadway capacity and level of service

- Consider five lane section from Hamilton to Missoula to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion

Environmental

- US 93 noise impacts through communities; Lolo and Florence
- Lack of sufficient number of wildlife crossings
- Maintain wildlife corridors – integrate with open space and public land planning

Planning / process / data / related area issues

- *Lack of alternate route around Missoula to I-90*
- *Is Montana Rail Link involved as a stakeholder?*
- *Reserve St. left hand turn light heading north from Safeway needs to be adjusted after 10 p.m. – one may sit through 2-3 signal cycles*
- *MDT has done a wonderful job with the installation of the bike/ped pathway between Lolo and Florence (and beyond) – connection of the pathway between Lolo and Missoula is critical and part of the lifestyle we have come to expect in Montana*
- *Realistic funding for any transportation plan or solution*
- *Realistic plans based upon current or recent approved plans for future development*
- *Conversation about limiting new residential development*
- *Make residential developers pay for their impacts*
- *Quit spending taxpayer money*
- *Quit having public input and do something*
- *Realistic estimate of costs for consultants and talk, but no action*
- *“nothing said during the public process will be listened to and the wealthy developers will have their thousands of homes (\$200,000 and above) approved without any funding to do anything – once again, taxpayers foot the bill and get no relief”*
- *Growth: use land use planning, growth management and zoning to control where growth occurs*
- *Avoid creating an additional, high-use arterial in Missoula*
- *The study needs to address how traffic into Missoula will be affected – from Brooks St./Reserve St. north*
- *The study needs to look at how improvements to the highway (US 93) will affect residential growth in the Bitterroot Valley*
- *There could be discussion with Montana Rail Link about “rail banking” the Bitterroot Branch to become the non-motorized connection*
- *Concern for identifying funding to implement improvement projects*